

ROSA Watch

Rosa watch is a monthly bulletin that aims to bring you up-to-date useful information about food security, and do so rapidly and directly.

Each issue has:

- 1) a main subject with a common database of reference documents available from the **ROSA online library**
- 2) a selection of new documents put online on the **blackboard** and regularly updated by a watch on subjects dealt with by the network.

In this issue:

- **ROSA document collection:**
On the subject of **social transfers**
- **ROSA news**
September – October 2008

Would you like to tell us about some news or a recently published article, or just make a comment? Contact the team of moderators (albyflores@gret.org and alpha@gret.org). All contributions are welcome!

ONLINE LIBRARY

The ROSA document collection

Social transfers

Rosa Focus No. 3 (March 2008)

The bi-monthly insight sets the terms of the debate on the system of social transfers and their role in improving access to food. The article is based on the guidelines written up by Nicholas Freeland (RHVP) in preparation for the seminar organised by EuropeAid in April 2008.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.imc.de/data/blackboard/zoom_de_rosa_no_3.pdf

Rosa Focus No. 6 (June 2008)

The bi-monthly insight presents a summary of the draft version of the note prepared by EuropeAid (the final version is being finalised). It deals with the question of the prerequisites and the timeframe needed for setting up social transfers. The article talks about the need to have information for assessing vulnerability; political decisions and appropriate coordination at an institutional level; the adoption of a legal and regulatory framework; and the availability and good management of financial and human resources. Decisions also need to be taken for defining, setting up and steering social transfer programmes for which an appropriate timeframe needs to be chosen.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.imc.de/data/blackboard/zoom_de_rosa_no_6.pdf

Entitlement and access to food: Systems of social transfers to fight extreme poverty. Position paper (April 2008)

This guideline was written by EuropeAid Unit E6 and Nicholas Freeland (RHVP). It was prepared for the seminar organised in Brussels from 15th to 18th April 2008 on the theme “Right and access to food: social transfer systems for combating extreme poverty”.

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ROSA Watch N° 1

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In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/seminar_position_paper_social_transfers.doc

Presentations given during the seminar in April 2008 are also available from the ROSA site on-line library ("social transfers"). Discussions centred on the lessons to be learned from several experiments carried out notably in East Africa, Central America and Central and Eastern Europe.

Regional seminar on food security in West and Central Africa - European Commission (September 2008)

During the EC internal seminar for West and Central Africa, a working session was spent analysing the way "access" is taken into account in EC-supported food security strategies and programmes. Two presentations opened the debate. Jacqueline Delarue talked about the seminar's conclusions and recommendations, the lessons learned, the EC alternatives and the instruments used.

http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/2.3._systemes_transferts_sociaux_jacqueline_delarue.ppt

Anthony Hodges gave a presentation on social transfer systems in West and Central Africa based on the results of a study currently underway.

http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/2.4._social_transfers_west_central_africa_anthony_hodges.ppt

Policy briefs on social transfers – RHVP Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme (June 2007)

The RHVP programme published a series of policy briefs that aim to improve understanding and awareness of questions about the definition and the implementation of social transfers (design, targets, supply mechanisms, costs, implementation). The main objective is to show the importance of bringing a comprehensive long-term response for sustainably reducing vulnerability, supplying information on experiences and learning lessons from them.

Some policy briefs (in English):

An overview of the series http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_briefs_overview.pdf

What are social transfers? http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_1.pdf

Choosing the best social transfer http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_4.pdf

Delivering social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_5.pdf

Targeting social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_6.pdf

Cost, affordability and value of social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_7.pdf

Implementing social transfers: ten key messages http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/policy_brief_10.pdf

REBA Thematic briefs – RHVP (avril 2008)

This series of thematic briefs was written by Stephen Devereux, Frank Ellis and Philip White as part of the REBA (*Regional Evidence Building Agenda*) initiative. The briefs deal with cross-cutting subjects based on results of case studies carried out in six southern African countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

Some thematic briefs (in English):

Vulnerability and social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_1.pdf

Targeting social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_2.pdf

Delivery of social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_3.pdf

Coordination and coverage http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_4.pdf

Cost-effectiveness of social transfers http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_5.pdf

Social transfers and markets http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/brief_6.pdf

Social protection for the poor: lessons from recent international experience – Stephen Devereux – IDS Working Paper 142 (2002)

This paper gives some elements of an analysis of the design and impact of social protection programmes. It talks about targets, choosing between transfers in cash and in kind (food, agricultural inputs, ...) and the cost-effectiveness of social transfer programmes. It also talks about sustainability. The author emphasises the need for funders and governments to work together to create the right conditions to set up sustainable social protection systems. Particular attention must be paid to the institutional framework, logistics and political intentions.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/ids_social_protection_for_the_poor_2002.pdf

Policy options for increasing the contribution of social protection to food security – Stephen Devereux – IDS (September 2003)

The paper was written for the Forum on Food Security in Southern Africa. Firstly, it looks at the definition of social protection and talks about choices of priority in implementing social transfer programmes in Southern Africa. Then it presents several social protection type actions ranging from cereal stocks to school meal programmes, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of these experiences. Finally, the author examines to what extent the poverty reduction documents of countries in the region take account of the social protection question.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/ids_social_protection_food_security_september_2003.pdf

Food security and social protection – Elizabeth Cromwell and Rachel Slater – ODI (2004)

This study was written to contribute to the DFID position paper on including food security in social protection policies, strategies and programmes in developing countries.

The authors emphasise that food security can be strengthened by setting up safety nets or other measures that are part of a wider social protection strategy. However, programmes for reducing food insecurity are different from ones that aim to reduce vulnerability. They must incorporate economic and social dimensions and take into consideration both factors linked to the current economic climate and structural factors.

English version: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/odi_food_security_and_social_protection_2004.pdf

How cash transfers boost work and economic security – Guy Standing – DESA Working Paper 58 (2007)

The author asks about the relevance of targeting and the conditioning of cash transfer programmes. He analyses a certain number of experiences that show that non-targeted unconditional cash transfers are more effective and fairer.

English version: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/un_desa_cash_transfers_october_2007.pdf

No small change. Malawi and Zambia emergency cash transfer projects: a synthesis of key learnings – Paul Harvey and Kevin Savage (juin 2006)

In 2005 and 2006, Oxfam UK set up two cash transfer projects in Zambia and Malawi. The

programmes were assessed by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and this paper uses its main conclusions. The assessment brings out the points in common and the differences between the two experiences and provides elements for analysing the lessons learned for future programmes. The authors emphasise the need for better interconnections between short term actions and social protection programmes set up in the countries.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/hpg_odi_oxfam_emergency_cash_projects_2006.pdf

Safety nets and the right to food. Directives on the right to food – FAO (2006)

This paper analyses the role safety nets are likely to play, and particularly food security safety nets, in making the right to food a reality. The first part presents the obligations of governments in terms of the right to food. Then the concept of safety nets is analysed from a rights-based approach. The last part is a discussion on the main criteria that need to be considered in designing and choosing food security safety nets. Particular attention is given to choosing between cash transfer or food based programmes.

In French: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/fao_files_securite_droit_alimentation_2006.pdf

Cash transfers and food aid. A primer – Ugo Gentilini – WFP (2007)

After summarising existing cash and food transfers, the author draws out the main context factors that make it possible to select the optimal type of transfer. He questions the dichotomy between emergency food aid and cash for development activities. Some of the factors that help decide which option or group of actions will be the most appropriate are the programme objectives, market analysis and beneficiary needs and preferences.

French version: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/pam_gentilini_transferts_m_on_taires_aa_2007.pdf

English version: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/wfp_gentilini_cash_and_food_transfers_2007.pdf

Food based safety nets and similar programmes - Jennifer Coates and Beatrice Lorge Rogers, World Bank (September 2002)

This study is part of the World Bank series "An introduction to social safety nets". It presents the different types of food based transfers used in so-

cial safety net programmes (extra food programmes, food for work, food vouchers, relief programmes). The authors highlight several elements that need considering when designing food based safety nets, and operational questions for implementing them. The analysis shows that the different types of food security safety nets are complementary in that each one addresses a specific group of people and a specific need. Thus they must be seen as complements rather than alternatives.

In French: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/bm_files_alimentaires_de_securite_septe_mbre_2002.pdf

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/wb_food_based_safety_nets_september_2002.pdf

What role for safety net transfers in very low income countries - J. Smith and K. Subbara, World Bank (January 2003)

This study is part of the World Bank series "An introduction to social safety nets". It looks at the difficulties faced by very low income countries in setting up social transfer programmes. The report looks first at the role of social safety nets as part of the strategy against poverty, from the viewpoint of growth and income distribution. Then it studies the characteristics of poverty in these countries, to see what implications they have for choosing social safety nets. The report also looks at administrative and fiscal constraints, and talks about elements to consider when choosing programmes for these countries.

In French: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/bm_role_transferts_sociaux_pays_tres_faibles_revenus_2003.pdf

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/wb_role_safety_net_transfers_very_low_income_countries_jan_2003.pdf

Social safety nets in response to crisis: lessons and guidelines from Asia and Latin America – Bomquist et al. – World Bank (February 2001)

This study analyses the role of social safety nets in coping with recent crises. It is based on experience in Asian countries (crisis in 1997-99) and in Latin America (crises in 1994-95 and 1997). The authors emphasise the need to set up social protection safety nets before crises. They could later be adapted to attenuate the effects of a crisis on the most vulnerable groups.

English version: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/wb_safety_nets_response_crisis_2001.pdf

BLACKBOARD ROSA News

New documents on line

Fuelling exclusion? The biofuels boom and poor people's access to land – IIED and FAO (2008) This report looks at the increased demand for biofuels and the implications for food security due to increased competition for land.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/iied_fuelling_exclusion_biofuels_boom_2008.pdf

Speculation and World Food Markets - IFPRI (July 2008) This document looks at the role of speculation in food markets. Although market fundamentals explain the flare in food product prices, it is important also to consider how speculation influences investment decisions and helps increase price volatility.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/ifpri_speculation_world_food_markets_july_2008.pdf

Price Watch Urban Food Markets - Fews Net (September 2008) Fews Net publishes a monthly bulletin that gives information on price trends in urban markets in over twenty countries.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/fews_net_price_watch_septembre_2008_.pdf

Regional food price update - SMIAR, FAO (September 2008) This bulletin provides information on price trends in food in the different regions. The FAO emphasises that prices are still high in low income countries which lack food.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/fao_september_2008_lifdc.pdf

International cereal prices – SMIAR, FAO (October 2008)

This bulletin shows international cereal price trends (wheat, maize and rice), which have been dropping the last few months.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/fao_international_cereal_prices_october_2008.pdf

Assessment of the world food security and nutrition situation – FAO (October 2008) This document was drawn up by the Food Security

Committee that met from 14th to 17th October in Rome. It presents an analysis of the increase in food prices and impacts globally, nationally and on households. It also reviews responses set up and proposes short, medium and long term actions.

In English: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/fao_assessment_world_fs_and_nutrition_situation_october_2008.pdf

Revised draft text of the Food Aid Charter (August 2008)

Since 2005, members of the Food Crisis Prevention Network (FCPN) have been underlining the need to revise the Food Aid Charter in the light of the changing context of food crises: i) the arrival of new donors who did not signed the Charter in 1990, ii) the emergence of civil society organisations who are very active in food security, iii) trend in the nature of food crises and diversification of response instruments, iv) considering the role and responsibilities of inter-governmental organisations (IGO) working with nations, v) taking account of general preoccupations about the effectiveness of aid. This document is a revised draft text that will be used as a basis for discussions with the different people concerned, with the aim of reaching an agreement and adopting a revised charter.

In French: http://aidco-lcms.im-c.de/data/blackboard/projet_de_texte_r_vis_charte_aa_ao_t_2008.pdf

This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA (Operational Food Security Network). It is an initiative of AIDCO E6 (thematic support for food security, rural development and environment) in collaboration with AIDCO G4 (Training and Knowledge Management). The viewpoints expressed do not in any case represent the official European Commission viewpoint.